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64TH CONGRESS, 1st Session. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. REPORT No. 849.

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF THE UNITED STATES.

JUNE 26, 1916.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. FESS, from the Committee on Education, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 4822.]

The Committee on Education, having considered the bill to provide for a national university, report:

Since this committee's unanimous report on the importance of the proposed national university in the last Congress and its recommendation of the passage of the bill, the European war has accentuated the importance of such an organization for research.

Among the many surprises to grow out of this the world's greatest conflict now raging in Europe is the resourcefulness of the German scholar. It is not too much to say that the German scientist in the laboratory is doing as much if not more than the German soldier in the field. His fertility in finding substitute for the supplies cut off by the embargoes is the standing wonder of the world.

An investigation will show that most of these discoveries emanate from the laboratories of universities, especially from Berlin.

This institution, perhaps the world's greatest research center, was the outgrowth of a dictum of the head of the German nation. At the close of the Napoleonic wars, when Prussia was reduced in her material as well as political integrity, the King caused the establishment of a national research institution at Berlin to retrieve by intellectual endeavor what had been lost by warfare. From modest beginning there has grown up this institution with a group of investigators whose service to science is now displayed in the stress of war.

There is no country in the world with the possibilities of scholarship in the fields of research equal to ours. Washington already is a center of research workers. Each department is a laboratory for investigation. Here with the marvelous facilities of laboratory and library equipment greater than those of all the colleges and universities in the country outside of the Capital, could be gathered the greatest group of head masters in research, with the largest collection of special students in the world. Washington must not only

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be made the center for the special research for American scholars, but for the scholars of other countries. The national university is designed to make available this rare equipment for the special research worker. It looks to an organization to which application can be made for such work with as little red tape as college entrance elsewhere requires. The recent passage of the bill for an archives building here in Washington to house all the valuable governmental documents should be but one item in the plan for research. No better time could be chosen for the establishment of the world's greatest university than now, when war with its disorganizing elements calls for rehabilitation through the enlistment of the scholars of our day. The country ought to make possible the realization of this dream of Gen. Washington and the list of public men and associations indorsing such a consummation. It is but adding the finishing touch to our magnificent educational system.

Popular education lies at the foundation of our democratic system of government. To supply it must largely rest with the States. Marked advancement has been made in this field. Illiteracy is being rapidly banished. Vocational training is receiving attention.

Higher education is also well cared for in colleges, universities, and technical schools. Almost every State has its system of State normal schools for the training of teachers. Most of them have the State university, primarily for agricultural and mechanical training, but in later years the modern State university, answering to wider demands which do graduate work. There are nearly 500 colleges, private and denominational, within the boundaries of the United States. Among these there are a few heavily endowed institutions which do graduate work, in addition to the regular college work.

Notwithstanding the galaxy of American higher educational institutions, its colleges, universities, and technical schools, many of which stand very high educationally, the country does not have a university in the true sense. In every institution, however good, the chief work, the mass of students, the large proportion of teaching force, the major use of laboratories, etc., are devoted to undergraduate work, to college rather than university work. We have no single institution devoted to the sort and degree of work chiefly done by the Berlin University. Johns Hopkins comes the nearest to it. Such an institution as is here proposed would complete our system of education by utilizing the vast resources here in the capital for the special research of the expert investigator. The recent discoveries of Dr. Rittman in the Bureau of Mines are directly to the point. This is but a suggestion of what may be done.

The proposal here is to materialize the ambition of the founder of the Nation.

Washington made a national university a specific item of recommendation at different times in his messages to Congress. He communicated his views in writing to such men as Randolph, Hamilton, and Jefferson, members of his Cabinet. He made specific recommendations to State officials of Virginia, including Gov. Brooke, in 1795; he solemnly urged it in his Farewell Address in 1796, and in the same year he communicated his wish to the Commissioners of the District of Columbia, even going so far as to indicate his willingness to set aside a fund for its establishment and to specify the probable site of the plant.

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Before his death he had the indorsement of most public men, inside and outside of the two Houses of Congress. In 1799 his will contained a bequest of 50 shares ($500 each) of Potomac stock for the beginning.

His scheme was most heartily indorsed in official capacity by John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, J. Q. Adams, and Andrew Jackson. Jefferson, one of the country's earliest patrons of education, even went to the extent of proposing to Gen. Washington the transplanting of a European college, faculty and all, as an early step in the enterprise.

The appearance near the forties of sectional differences and the expression of the fear of too much centralization caused the friends of the enterprise to rest. In the forties and fifties much talk and some efforts were active in building such an institution at Albany, N. Y. The Civil War further shut out interest in the Washington project.

Interest was finally revived in 1869 by John W. Hoyt, who had made a tour of careful inspection of the European institutions of higher learning. The merits of Commissioner Hoyt's efforts lie in his effective work in creating a favorable impression among educators in the country. The results of his propaganda were noticed in the interest of the National Teachers' Association. At its annual meeting in 1869, held at Trenton, N. J., the association adopted a resolution offered by A. J. Rickoff, of Ohio, committing the association to the project. It also appointed a committee of 35, representing all parts of the Union and all the liberal as well as business professions, and upon which appear the names of Rickoff, of Ohio, and Wickersham, of Pennsylvania. From that day to this, this great association has stood committed to the consummation of the great undertaking. Of all its many great heads not one has rendered more valiant service than its present head, President Swain of Swarthmore College.

It was largely through this body, ably seconded by numerous great scholars in college and university circles, that there was won support of such men as Senator Charles Sumner, T. O. White, J. W. Paterson, M. H. Carpenter, J. J. Ingalls, W. B. Allison, L. Q. C. Lamar, A. H. Garland, and many others. Through the influence of these men a bill was introduced in both Houses of Congress in 1872. By this time the propaganda was winning the support of most of the college heads of the country. One very important exception was President Charles W. Eliot. In 1873 President Grant made the university proposition an item of favorable recommendation in his annual message. The National Education Association continued by resolution and addresses to keep the matter before the public. President Hayes indorsed the project in 1878. L. Q. C. Lamar, Secretary of the Interior under Cleveland, called the attention of the country to the neglect in his report to the President. In 1890 the Senate created a special standing committee, to be known as the National University Committee, which is still in existence, although quite dormant. The National Association of State University Presidents, representing all the State universities of the Nation, is also another significant association backing the movement.

Looking over the activities working for this consummation, one is bewildered over the fact that in the face of it all there is nothing accomplished by the Government.

Note the factors:

1. Urged by Washington.
2. Seconded by at least 10 of his successors.
3. Supported by at least half a dozen justices of the Supreme Court, including Chief Justices Jay, Rutledge, Marshall, and Chase.
4. Formally recommended by at least 20 Cabinet ministers, among them the most brilliant lights of our Nation.
5. Formal support by the heads of both the Army and Navy.
6. Enthusiastic advocacy of the heads of at least 400 colleges and universities.
7. Almost unanimous indorsement of both the scholars and learned associations of the country.
8. Advocacy by the leading clergymen of the country.
9. Advocacy of the public-school men and women in the country.
10. Support of various women's organizations of the land.
11. Warm support at different times of the Senate as a body.

This array of advocates would seem enough to enact any law that had an element of merit in it.

This support is based upon the following facts:

What we need in Washington is an institution not so much to multiply scholars as to develop scholarship; not to teach learners, but to produce research workers; not so much to disseminate knowledge already known, but to cultivate the power to find what is yet unknown.

Such an institution will not interfere with nor supersede the hundreds of institutions already existing, but it will supplement them, as it will indeed depend upon them for its supply of students seeking the rank of special experts. Instead of weakening the existent university or college, like the multiplied collective strand, it gains its strength from a combination of all without weakening any one.

It will be in a unique sense our university and will develop the sense of pride and democratic support not now felt by any institution. It will thus be sought by our ambitious men as they pass from college or university to the more specialized field of expert investigation. Graduate, as well as professor, who may be desired for some special work now and then, will look toward it. It will thus divert the flow of American students from Berlin, Paris, Oxford, Jena, and Vienna to Washington.

Not only this, but it will most certainly become the most metropolitan institution, patronized by the largest groups of European students as well as students from all other progressive countries in the world. The records of immigration to America for the past 50 years are conclusive of this statement.

There can not be serious doubt of the effect of such a national university upon scholarship in our own country. Washington long ago had come to be one of the greatest scientific centers of the earth. Here are assembled the most remarkable collections in the way of scientific material known to the scientific world. Here the various departments of scientific investigation, headed by the world's best experts, aided by a group of trained workers, with separate laboratories and experimental facilities, run up into the hundreds. Here, also, are domiciled 34 associations devoted to the investigations of truth in various spheres. At least that number are incorporated by act of Congress. These make Washington attractive to the scholar

of all countries. Many of the societies that are not domiciled here hold their annual meetings at the Capital.

If anyone should doubt the wisdom of the establishment of such an institution upon the ground that we do not need it, or upon the ground of expense, or of corrupt control, or upon any other ground, a complete answer is the Smithsonian Institution. This institution, established in 1840, with a $500,000 bequest, has proved itself to be one of the most successful in the advancement of knowledge. To-day it is well housed in buildings worth at least as much as the original gift, and it has accumulated collections of books and manuscripts by the simple method of Government exchange, with slight cost to anyone of an amount beyond the original gift. Besides this, here under such men as Henry, Baird, Powell, Newcomb, Goode, Langley, and others, have grown up these rare agencies of advancement in useful knowledge. Here telegraphy was perfected and then turned over to the Government. Research on the lines of climate, meteorology, etc., was conducted by these leaders of science and was finally allowed to grow under governmental agencies into the present Weather Bureau. Under the direction of Prof. Baird investigations of life in the sea, with special relation to fish purely in a scientific interest, grew into the Government Fish Commission, now so important as an agency under experts attempting to supply needed food from the wastes of ocean waters. Other important governmental agencies had their beginnings here. The Congressional Library, America's greatest collection of books, housed in the world's most beautiful building, was started in the same way by the same institution.

In view of such results flowing from this single establishment, we ask, What is the possibility of a national university under a similar management with means multiplied and a field unlimited? Even to-day there exists in the Capital the university, only awaiting organization, housing, and research students. Probably in no one place in the world is there such a rare and numerous aggregation of material for laboratory use as in Washington. No university could gather such laboratory facilities.

The bill provides that there shall be established in the District of Columbia an institution of higher learning, to be known as the National University of the United States.

Its purpose is to promote the advance of science, pure and applied, and of the liberal and fine arts by original investigation and research and such other means as may appear suitable. Furthermore, to train men and women for posts of responsibility in the public and private service of State and Nation; also to cooperate with the scientific departments of the Federal Government and with the various colleges and universities, public and private, throughout the country. This last purpose is one of the most important.

Located in various parts of the city are museums, bureaus, observatories, exchanges, laboratories, etc., any one of which is not to be found in equal richness of material in any place in the country. The Agricultural Department alone is a good example. Here in one department of investigation are found: (*a*) The Weather Bureau, with almost a score of experts at work; (*b*) the Bureau of Animal Industry, with over a dozen experts; (*c*) the Bureau of Plant Industry, with nearly 40 experts; (*d*) the Forest Service, with about 30

experts; (*e*) the Bureau of Chemistry, with at least 35 experts; (*f*) the Bureau of Soils, with 7 experts; (*g*) the Bureau of Entomology, with more than a dozen experts; (*h*) the Bureau of Biological Survey, with a half-dozen experts; besides experts from 6 to 15 in charge of separate Bureaus of Accounts and Disbursements, Publications, Statistics, Library, Experiment Stations, and Public Roads. This last is the youngest of many research foundations here in the Capital which fitly represent the scientific operations of the Government. There is scarcely a single field of expert investigation that is not well worked here, and by the world's greatest experts, and with the highest results. The annual reports of these various bureaus that number in the hundreds would make a library. The monetary value represented will reach into the millions of dollars. To operate them requires about five millions a year. The experts employed and those elsewhere affiliated with the work here will number into the hundreds.

The new discoveries announced from time to time are world-wide in import, and some of them revolutionize scientific knowledge. Air navigation was solved by governmental investigation. The Panama Canal was made possible by governmental engineering skill. Yellow fever was annihilated by a Government expert. Probably more useful applications of scientific knowledge have been perfected in Washington than in any other place in the world.

The easy possibility of utilizing these unequaled resources for stimulating wide-awake students is the chief and immediate ground for the proposed institution.

It is to be a graduate institution.

The ultimate authority in the government of the institution is vested in a board of trustees appointed by the President of the United States; but this board must consult and consider the counsel and advice of a national advisory council, consisting of one representative from each State in the Union, this representative to be the president of the State university in those States in which there is a State university, and in those States where no such institution exists a person to be appointed by the governor of the State. This form of organization secures two great advantages. It secures the efficiency, economy, promptness, and vigor of administration characteristic of a small board vested with full authority to act.

The institution is authorized to accept gifts and donations of money or property from any private citizen or public body, provided these gifts be given with no conditions attached for the general purposes of the university. This university will have an organic affiliation with educational institutions of other countries by which we will have the exchange of professorships. It would be difficult to estimate the influence upon a better understanding and relationship with all countries of ideas as an organization of this sort located at the capital of the Nation. It would be a far greater insurance against world warfare than battleships. Now, when Europe is in the throes of war and all education is at a standstill, is the time to establish this institution.

It goes without saying that such an institution must be free from all characteristics that dominate modern college life. Modern athletics, college spirit, and the consequent police disciplinary features,

all proper in their places, will have no place here. Even degrees are not to be sought.

In this beautiful Capital of the Nation, with the galaxy of great buildings, housing such treasures of art and science, with its many associations, representing great learning, the significant item of world meaning, the crown of it all is lacking—a national university.

If the Government would make good the $25,000, the gift of the father of the country for this purpose, it would materialize now a sum sufficient to provide not only the necessary administration building, but an endowment sufficient to care for all the future needs. Twenty-five thousand dollars at 6 per cent compound interest from 1799 to 1916 would amount to over $24,000,000. If we add to this such gifts as may be offered by benefactors, the endowment can be placed easily in the $100,000,000 mark.

The bill carries an initial appropriation of $500,000. The organization and location of buildings will be left to the board of control. The committee believes such an institution is demanded in the interest of learning by the highest dignity and welfare of the Nation and the honor of the founder of the Republic, who urgently recommended it, and which has been strongly urged by many other distinguished Americans.

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